



**Office Of The Mayor
Thomas M. McMahon**

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

For More Information:
Ginny Hand , 610-655-6234

**Members Of Mayors Against Illegal Guns Stand With Police Chiefs
And Members Of Congress To Urge Repeal Of TIAHRT Amendment**

House Appropriations Committee Set to Consider Tiahrt Amendment This Week

Over 225 Mayors, 34 National, State, and Regional Law Enforcement Organizations, 212 Law Enforcement Executives and 28 Editorial Boards Are Opposed to the Tiahrt Amendment

The bi-partisan coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns today stood on Capitol Hill with law enforcement officials and members of Congress to urge the repeal of the Tiahrt Amendment. The event comes on the eve of a crucial vote in the House Appropriations Committee. The mayors oppose the Tiahrt Amendment, named after Kansas Representative Todd Tiahrt who has sponsored it, because of how it restricts the access of cities and law enforcement to gun trace data, an essential crime fighting tool. The removal of the Tiahrt Amendment is the top legislative priority of the over 225-member Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition, co-chaired by New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, who led today's event.

"The Tiahrt Amendment is the most anti-cop, soft-on-crime law Congress has passed in years," said Mayor Bloomberg. "It prevents our police officers from tracking the illegal gun trade – and locking up those who engage in it. Imagine if Congress put the same constraints on police when investigating illegal drug sales – no one would stand for it. Later this week, the House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to vote on a bill that currently includes the Tiahrt Amendment. If the bill is passed, it would be an insult to thousands of police officers who face the threat of illegal guns."

"Mayors from across the country, who are on the front lines of public safety, are saying enough is enough," said Mayor Menino. "It is time Washington stopped ignoring the violence caused by

illegal guns every day. We need to stop protecting rogue gun dealers and start protecting our police by removing the Tiahrt Amendment and the restrictions it imposes on law enforcement.”

The Mayors’ campaign to remove the Tiahrt Amendment enjoys wide support from law enforcement. Thirty-four national, state and regional law enforcement organizations have come out against the Tiahrt Amendment – including the National Sheriffs’ Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police and the Texas Association of Chiefs of Police. Further, 28 newspaper editorial boards are on the record opposing the Tiahrt Amendment, including the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, the Cincinnati Enquirer, the Indianapolis Star, the Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune and the Wichita Eagle – the hometown paper of Representative Tiahrt. Also, 212 law enforcement executives have come out against the Tiahrt Amendment on behalf of their jurisdictions.

“The police in Chicago and every other city are working day and night to keep illegal guns out of the hands of criminals, and they need help – not hindrance – from their senators and representatives in Washington, D.C.,” said Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley. “I can’t believe that anyone who’s in favor of law and order would want to tie the hands of our police when it comes to tracing the guns used in crimes. Instead of protecting the gun lobby, Congress should be protecting the people of this nation from the gun violence that claims the lives of 30,000 of their constituents each year.”

“This law has made it more difficult for police to protect us from harm,” said San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom. “The only people the Tiahrt Amendment protects is rogue gun dealers.”

“Given the alarming increase in violent crime and drastic cuts in federal assistance for vital local law enforcement programs, it is critical now more than ever that sheriffs have access to more information to combat crime not less,” said Ann Yom, Legislative Director for the National Sheriffs’ Association. “We believe that the Tiahrt amendment debilitates law enforcement’s ability to effectively share information with other agencies and object to its restrictions relating to gun trace data.”

“This is the right thing to do if we want to give our law enforcement officers the best available tools to fight illegal gun trafficking and keep our citizens and communities safe from violent crime,” said Representative Peter King (R-NY).

“The Tiahrt Amendment handcuffs our cops not criminals,” said Representative C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger. “As a former prosecutor, I know how important it is to give our law enforcement officials the tools they need to keep our families and our communities safe.”

“Not even the most avid gun owners should be opposed to tracing the sources of illegal guns. This is about cracking down on criminals, and no one else,” said Senator Charles E. Schumer.

“We all want to fight crime and get illegal guns off the streets, but in order to do that, we must give law enforcement the information and resources they need to do their jobs effectively,” said Senator Hillary Clinton. “For years, the Tiahrt amendment has made it more difficult and more dangerous for police officers to combat illegal gun trafficking. I want to commend Mayor

Michael Bloomberg and the other Mayors Against Illegal Guns for their leadership on this issue. It is well past time for Congress to follow their courageous lead.”

“At a time when bloodshed on our streets is on the rise, making sure that our law enforcement officers have all the tools they need to fight crime should be our top priority,” said Senator Barack Obama. “But instead of providing those tools, the Tiahrt Amendment ties the hands of police in their effort to halt illegal gun trafficking and sales. I am proud to join the Mayors Against Illegal Guns in their fight against this dangerous legislation. Our communities and the brave men and women who risk their lives everyday to protect us deserve more from Congress.”

The Tiahrt Amendment, a version of which has been inserted into the Department of Justice appropriations bill each year since Fiscal Year 2003, places broad restrictions on the use of gun trace data, which gives investigators information on where a gun was purchased and who it was sold to. The Tiahrt Amendment also prevents local governments and police from accessing federal gun trace data from areas outside their immediate geographic jurisdiction; prevents cities from using trace data in state and local civil enforcement actions, including gun license revocations; and prevents the ATF from publishing reports that use gun trace data to analyze nationwide gun trafficking patterns.

Mayors Bloomberg and Menino were joined by Mayors Against Illegal Guns members Mayor Douglas Palmer of Trenton, New Jersey, also the President of the United States Conference of Mayors; Mayor Sheila Dixon of Baltimore, Maryland; Mayor Herb W. Bergson of Duluth, Minnesota; Mayor Tom McMahon of Reading, Pennsylvania; Mayor Adrian Fenty of Washington, D.C.; Mayor William B. Euille of Alexandria, Virginia; Mayor Philip Amicone of Yonkers, New York; Mayor Ernest D. Davis of Mt. Vernon, New York; Mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans, Louisiana; and Mayor Donald Cresitello of Morristown, New Jersey.

Members of Congress at the event included: Senator Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ), Representative Chaka Fattah (D-PA), Representative Patrick J. Kennedy (D-RI), Representative Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) and Representative C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD). Police officials at the event were New York City Police Department Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly; Philadelphia Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson; Louisville Police Chief Robert C. White; Chaska, Minnesota Police Chief Scott Knight; Baltimore Police Chief Leonard Hamm; Yonkers, New York Police Commissioner Edmund Hartnett; New Carrollton, Maryland Police Chief David G. Rice and Alexandria, Virginia Police Chief David Baker. Also at the event were Ray Schoenke, President of the American Hunters and Shooters Association; Ann Yom, Legislative Director, National Sheriffs’ Association; Ronald Hampton, Executive Director, National Black Police Association and Chuck Wexler, Executive Director of the Police Executive Research Forum.

Contact: New York City Mayor’s Press Office (212) 788-2958
Boston Mayor’s Press Office (617) 635-4461